has taken a number of significant steps having multi-dimensional approach to prevent drug trafficking. These include instructions to all drug law enforcement agencies to maintain utmost vigil and step up enforcement efforts, training of officers, fencing of Indo-Pak border, vesting of powers in BSF and Coast Guards under the Customs Act, quarterly co-ordination meetings of Central and State drug law enforcement agencies by Narcotics Control Bureau, holding of quarterly border meetings of Indian and Pakistani anti-narcotics agencies as a part of the border meetings of BSF and Pak-rangers and holding of operational level meetings with Myanmar officials.

FICCI Memorandum Regarding Increase in Dividend Tax

3907. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry has submitted a memorandum to him with regard to the increase in dividend tax from 10 per cent to 20 per cent proposed in this year's budget;

(b) if so. the details thereof and his reaction thereto; and

(c) whether the proposed measure would be reviewed with regard to the objections raised in the aforesaid memorandum and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR) : (a) to (c) No, sir. However, a copy of the memorandum has been obtained from FICCI The proposals regarding the increase in dividend tax from ten per cent to twenty per cent are being considered by the Government and the decision thereon will be reflected in the response of the Government to the discussion in the Parliament on the Finance Bill, 2000.

Constitution of Expenditure Reforms Commission

3908. SHRI AMAR SINGH;

SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since appointed Expenditure Reforms Commission and if so, the details thereof including the terms of reference; and

(b) by when it is likely to submit its report ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) The Expenditure Reforms Commission has been constituted on 28th February, 2000. The Commission is expected to give its final report within a period of one year. The terms of reference of the Expenditure Reforms Commission are as under :—

(i) Keeping in view the evolving role of Government, the need to foster convergence and avoiding overlap in the functions of different Central Government Ministries, Departments and attached organisations and the role of the State Governments, suggest a road map for reducing the functions, activities and administrative structure of the Central Government;

(ii) Review the framework of all subsidies, both explicit and implicit, examine the economic rationale for their continuance and make recommendations for making subsidies transparent and suggest measures for maximising their impact on the target population at minimum cost;

(iii) Review the framework for determination of user charges of departmental and commercial entities and suggest an effective strategy for cost recovery through user charges;

(iv) Review the adequacy of staffing under Central Government Ministries, attached offices and institutions and suggest measures for rationalising the staff and cadres of different services. In this context also review the existing arrangements for re-deployment and re-training of surplus staff to ensure that any additional manpower for new areas of Government activities are met by re-deployment;

(v) Review the procedure for setting up Government funded autonomous institutions and their pattern of funding and suggest measures for effecting improvement and reducing budgetary support for their activities; and

(vi) Consider any other relevant issue concerning expenditure management in Government and make suitable recommendations.